

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MARCH 29, 2012

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2011–12 REGULAR SESSION

## ASSEMBLY BILL

**No. 2186**

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**Introduced by Assembly Member Grove**

February 23, 2012

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~~An act to amend Section 16000 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, relating to foster care. An act to add Chapter 1.4 (commencing with Section 1945) to Division 2.5 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, and to repeal Chapter 1614 of the Statutes of 1984, relating to the Youth Emergency Telephone Referral Project.~~

### LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 2186, as amended, Grove. ~~Foster care services. Youth Emergency Telephone Referral Project.~~

*Existing uncodified law establishes the Youth Emergency Telephone Referral Project, in the Office of Criminal Justice Planning, to be headquartered in Sacramento, as specified. Existing law provides that the Office of Criminal Justice Planning may directly implement the project, or may contract with nonprofit corporations, as specified, for administration of the project.*

*This bill would recast and codify these uncodified provisions of law establishing the project and stating the intent of the Legislature in that regard. The bill would establish the project in the California Emergency Management Agency, and would provide that the agency may directly implement the project, or may administer competitively awarded grants awarded to nonprofit corporations to do so, as specified. The bill would delete the provisions requiring the project be headquartered in Sacramento.*

~~Existing law declares the intent of the Legislature to preserve and strengthen a child's family ties whenever possible, removing the child from the custody of his or her parents only when necessary for his or her welfare or for the safety and protection of the public. Existing law includes various provisions relating to the provision of appropriate placement and other services for children in foster care.~~

~~This bill would make a technical, nonsubstantive change to a provision relating to foster children.~~

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: ~~no~~ yes.  
State-mandated local program: no.

*The people of the State of California do enact as follows:*

1     *SECTION 1. Chapter 1.4 (commencing with Section 1945) is*  
2     *added to Division 2.5 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, to*  
3     *read:*

4  
5             *CHAPTER 1.4. YOUTH EMERGENCY TELEPHONE REFERRAL*  
6                             *PROJECT*

7  
8     *1945. The Legislature finds and declares that the problem of*  
9     *runaway children is one of major significance, causing great*  
10    *suffering both for parents, who often do not know whether their*  
11    *child is alive, as well as for the runaways themselves, as they often*  
12    *are young, impressionable children, who are frequently the victims*  
13    *of crime, including forced prostitution, drug abuse, and death.*

14    *1946. (a) There is, administered by the California Emergency*  
15    *Management Agency, the Youth Emergency Telephone Referral*  
16    *Project. The agency may directly implement the project or may*  
17    *administer grants that shall be awarded pursuant to a request for*  
18    *application process. Grants shall be competitively awarded to*  
19    *nonprofit corporations that can most efficiently and effectively*  
20    *meet the following mandated objectives:*

21    *(1) Provide a statewide 24-hour youth emergency telephone*  
22    *hotline for homeless or runaway youth.*

23    *(2) Provide referrals to appropriate services to homeless or*  
24    *runaway youth who call the hotline, for shelter, meals, clothing,*  
25    *counseling, and other services necessary for their well-being.*

26    *(3) Provide 24-hour telephone crisis counseling by trained*  
27    *volunteer or paid staff for homeless or runaway youth.*

1     (4) *Serve as a message center for homeless or runaway youth*  
2 *who wish to communicate with their parents or guardians.*

3     (b) *The agency shall supervise the grant recipients, as needed,*  
4 *to ensure compliance with the objectives of this chapter.*

5     (c) *The agency shall, in conjunction with providers of telephone*  
6 *service, establish and implement a statewide toll-free telephone*  
7 *number to carry out the purposes of this chapter. The agency shall*  
8 *use the provider of telephone services that, in the opinion of the*  
9 *agency, provides the most efficient services at the lowest cost.*

10    (d) *The agency shall publicize the existence of the referral*  
11 *service through the print and electronic media, including, but not*  
12 *limited to, the use of television and radio public service*  
13 *announcements, brochures, newspaper announcements, posters,*  
14 *bumper stickers, and agreements for the provision of publicity,*  
15 *free of charge, by private entities.*

16    (e) *The agency shall cooperate with other services of this kind*  
17 *throughout the United States, or existing local services in*  
18 *California, with the goal of aiding, rather than preempting, these*  
19 *services.*

20    SEC. 2. *Chapter 1614 of the Statutes of 1984 is repealed.*

21    SECTION 1. ~~Section 16000 of the Welfare and Institutions~~  
22 ~~Code is amended to read:~~

23    16000. (a) ~~It is the intent of the Legislature to preserve and~~  
24 ~~strengthen a child's family ties whenever possible, removing the~~  
25 ~~child from the custody of his or her parents only when necessary~~  
26 ~~for his or her welfare or for the safety and protection of the public.~~  
27 ~~If a child is removed from the physical custody of his or her~~  
28 ~~parents, preferential consideration shall be given whenever possible~~  
29 ~~to the placement of the child with the relative as required by~~  
30 ~~Section 7950 of the Family Code. If the child is removed from his~~  
31 ~~or her own family, it is the purpose of this chapter to secure as~~  
32 ~~nearly as possible for the child the custody, care, and discipline~~  
33 ~~equivalent to that which should have been given to the child by~~  
34 ~~his or her parents. It is further the intent of the Legislature to~~  
35 ~~reaffirm its commitment to children who are in out-of-home~~  
36 ~~placement to live in the least restrictive, most family like setting~~  
37 ~~and to live as close to the child's family as possible pursuant to~~  
38 ~~subdivision (c) of Section 16501.1. Family reunification services~~  
39 ~~shall be provided for expeditious reunification of the child with~~

1 his or her family, as required by law. If reunification is not possible  
2 or likely, a permanent alternative shall be developed.  
3 (b) ~~It is further the intent of the Legislature to ensure that all~~  
4 ~~pupils in foster care and those who are homeless as defined by the~~  
5 ~~federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C.~~  
6 ~~Sec. 11301 et seq.) have the opportunity to meet the challenging~~  
7 ~~state pupil academic achievement standards to which all pupils~~  
8 ~~are held. In fulfilling their responsibilities to pupils in foster care,~~  
9 ~~educators, county placing agencies, care providers, advocates, and~~  
10 ~~the juvenile courts shall work together to maintain stable school~~  
11 ~~placements and to ensure that each pupil is placed in the least~~  
12 ~~restrictive educational programs, and has access to the academic~~  
13 ~~resources, services, and extracurricular and enrichment activities~~  
14 ~~that are available to all pupils. In all instances, educational and~~  
15 ~~school placement decisions shall be based on the best interests of~~  
16 ~~the child.~~